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ABSTRACT

This introduction to sociolinguistics surveys the various ways that language can be studied as a social phenomenon, examining known relationships between language variation and large-scale social factors and showing how this variation runs along "fault lines in social structure," such as divisions between social classes, the sexes, and different ethnic groups. Topics covered include the domains of language use, language change, code-switching, speech as social action, and the nature of meaning and understanding. This revised edition includes an analysis of language standardization, language conflict and planning, and a critique of the pragmatic theory of communication. It explains and illustrates the notion of register and examines the issues surrounding language ideology and power. (MSE)

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